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LIBERIA.

BY

SIR HARRY JOHNSTON, G. C. M. G., K. C. B.

FROM THE SMITHSONIAN REPORT FOR 1905, PAGES 247–264.
(WITH PLATES I–VII).

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By Sir Harry Johnston, G. C. M. G., K. C. B.

Liberia is a portion of the West African coast lands which may be styled the end of Northern Guinea. Its southernmost promontory—Cape Palmas—of all the Guinea coast projects farthest southward, to scarcely more than 4° from the equator. The northern political boundary of Liberia meets the coast at the mouth of the river Mano in north latitude 7°. The actual boundary on the south, between Liberia and the French possessions on the Ivory coast, is the course of the river Kavalli, the mouth of which river lies about 13 miles to the east of Cape Palmas, in latitude 4° 22′. The northernmost extremity of Liberian territory on the coast lies just to the south of that marshy and densely forested portion of the Sierra Leone colony—the Sherbro district—which one might say, with a fairly accurate guess, was the farthest point reached by the Carthaginian explorer Hanno in his celebrated voyage of discovery along the northwest coast of Africa in about 520 B. C. It is probable that the "gorillas" which Hanno's expedition captured somewhere in the vicinity of the Sherbro River or of northern Liberia was the chimpanzees still found in these regions.

It will be seen on the map that Liberia occupies a most important strategic position on the west coast of Africa. The general trend of its coast is from northwest to southeast, parallel to the course taken by steamers plying across the Atlantic between Europe and South Africa. It might, in fact, in the hands of a strong naval power, exercise a very dominating influence over the eastern Atlantic, which is one reason, among many others, why Great Britain desires to see the independence of the Liberian Republic preserved and maintained.

The country of Liberia as a whole is one dense forest. It is practically the culmination of the West African forest, the regions to the north, east, and west having been more extensively cleared by man in past times, or partaking more of the park-land, grass-grown char-

[a] Read at the Royal Geographical Society, March 27, 1905. Reprinted, by permission, from The Geographical Journal, London, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, August, 1905. See also "Liberia," by Sir Harry Johnston, New York, 1906, 2 vols., 8vo.

acter owing to their less copious rainfall. Now that two English companies, in conjunction with the Government of Liberia, are endeavoring to develop the resources of the interior and to accumulate knowledge regarding the climate and products, attempts are being made to record the rainfall, as to the extent of which at present only a guess can be made. It is probable that south of latitude 8° 30′ the average annual rainfall of Liberia is not less than 100 inches. Adjoining regions in Sierra Leone have a recorded rainfall of something like 130 inches, so that this is probably an under rather than an over estimate. North of latitude 8° 30′ the rainfall diminishes probably to 60 or 80 inches per annum, and in consequence the dense forest gives way to a pastoral country of savannas, grassy hills, or park lands of grass, with dense forest along the stream valleys. Mr. Alexander Whyte, well known by his many years' work as an official in charge of botanical departments in the British East African Protectorates, spent a good deal of 1904 in Liberia, and in the report which he drew up for my information he considers that this country, which has a seaboard of approximately 350 miles long (from northwest to southeast) and a total superficies of about 45,000 square miles, has two somewhat different climates, depending, no doubt, a good deal on the latitude. In the southern regions, below latitude 6°, the rainiest time of the year appears to be the months of March to June and August to December. North of this—round Monrovia, for example—the specially rainy months are April to the end of July, September, and October.

From my own experience of Liberia, I should say that the heavy rainy season begins in April and lasts till the end of July. Then there is a pause of a month or six weeks with less rain, the heavy rains beginning again in September and lasting till the middle of November. From mid-November till the end of March is the dry season, at any rate in the northern half of Liberia, but in the southern part this dry season is not much more marked than it is in the Niger Delta. Rain, in fact, may fall in any month of the year. Between November and April is the worst season for storms, some of which are very violent.

When I first visited the coast of Liberia, in 1882 and 1885, the primeval forest grew down to the sea along a great proportion of the coast; but when I revisited this country in the summer of 1904, and touched at a good many places at the coast where I had noted forest growing as late as 1888, much of this big-tree woodland had been swept away to make room for plantations or even for towns. In fact, with a few exceptions, the big-tree and rubber-producing forest does not usually begin in its most marked characteristics until a journey of at least 15 miles has been made inland from the coast. I have estimated, from the reports of the agents of the British com-

PROVIDENCE ISLAND IN MESURADO LAGOON (MONROVIA IN THE FOREGROUND), WHERE THE AMERICO-LIBERIAN COLONISTS FIRST SETTLED.

A STREET IN MONROVIA. AMERICAN LEGATION ON RIGHT HAND.

HON. G. W. GIBSON, AN EX-PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA.

PRESIDENT BARCLAY.

panies and from the accounts of Liberian, British, and French explorers, that out of the 45,000 square miles which may be approximately assigned as the area of the Liberian Republic, at least 25,000 square miles consist of dense, uncleared forest, penetrated, it may be, by narrow native paths, but as often as not only pierced by elephant-made tracks. About 3,500 square miles represent the plantations, gardens, towns, and settlements of the Americo-Liberians along the coast and 2,000 or 3,000 square miles the clearings made by the indigenous natives in the dense forest. The remainder of the territory—about 15,000 square miles—is grass or park land in the possession of the Mandingo tribes, who are great cattle breeders. This is the characteristic of the far interior of Liberia, where it borders on the French possessions of Upper Nigeria. From all accounts I can collect, as well as from the little I have seen myself, I do not think that much of the interior of Liberia can be described as marshy. It is, on the other hand, inclined to be hilly, and at distances of from 40 to 100 miles inland the ranges of hills reach altitudes which might almost be dignified by the name of mountains. Some of these mountains (the Nimba range) attain heights of over 6,000 feet—this, at any rate, is the height ascribed to them by certain French explorers; and from what I am told by Mr. Maitland Pye-Smith, one of the agents of the aforesaid British companies, I am inclined to think that 4,000 feet, at any rate, is reached or exceeded by peaks in the Satro range. If the reports of certain travelers are justified, however, it may well turn out that there are altitudes (such as Mount Druple) on the Franco-Liberian border of over 9,000 feet, and consequently higher than anything that is to be met in West Africa south of the upper Niger and west of the Kamerun. Some of these mountain sides are precipitous, with faces of bare rock. Others, again, are clothed with dense vegetation to their summits, and this continuance of dense and lofty forests for miles and miles and miles will be a terrible hindrance to surveying in the future, while at the present time it gives to Liberian exploration the same sad and somewhat dreary character that has been so powerfully described by Stanley in recording his adventures in the great Kongo forest. Much as the botanist may glory in the splendid vegetation, I really think that in the long run one wearies more quickly and easily of forest than of desert.

Forest, in fact, is the distinguishing feature of Liberia as a country; it is the climax of the forest region of West Africa. In and from the forest will be derived the great future wealth of this country. The geologic formation would appear to be mainly Archean, and the rocks are mostly granite and quartz, with here and there indications of volcanic tuff. The rocks near the seacoast and in the coast ranges of hills are much impregnated with iron, and are consequently very red

in color. The appearance of this rock, especially where it is revealed by the roads which the Americo-Liberians have cleared in the coast region, is curiously pitted and honeycombed. It is hard, becoming especially indurated on exposure, and this makes it a good surface for road making, as it does not degenerate into mud. Very little is known about the possible mineral wealth of Liberia up to the present time, as the extremely dense forest of the interior is a great obstacle to a rapid survey of the country. Apart from hematite iron, which appears to exist nearly everywhere, there are traces of gold in the mud of the rivers, and native stories assert the existence of alluvial gold in the Mandingo uplands beyond the forest region. Lead has been discovered recently in the Kelipo country in eastern Liberia, and zinc ore in the vicinity of Monrovia. In the Kavalli region there is a great deal of corundum in the rocks. It has been alleged that a diamond was discovered in the hills behind Grand Basa by a Liberian, but as yet no confirmation of this discovery has reached me; nor have I been able to ascertain where the copper comes from which is used to a limited extent in some of the Mandingo weapons from the far interior.

The Liberian forests contain most of the West African timber trees. Such ebony as is exported, however, does not seem to be so good as that which is derived from the genus *Diospyros*. It is very probably derived from a papilionaceous tree belonging to the botanical genus of *Dalbergia*.[a] The wealth of this forest in india-rubber-producing trees, vines, and bushes is without parallel in any other part of Africa, unless it be one or two small areas of the Kongo basin. Counting the four rubber-producing figs, there appear to be at least twenty-two trees, plants, or vines which produce saleable rubber. These species include the well-known and widespread *Landolphia owariensis* and the magnificent *Funtumia elastica*, the rubber tree once so abundant in Lagos colony. The *Funtumia elastica* is stated to grow to over 200 feet in height. It closely resembles in appearance the allied species *Funtumia africana*, but there is a very considerable difference in the price of the rubber yielded by the one and the other—the rubber derived from *Funtumia africana* may, perhaps, be sold for 18 pence a pound, but the well-prepared rubber of *Funtumia elastica* ranges in value from 3 to 4 shillings. The distinctive features of the leaves, flowers, and fruit, which enable the observer to decide whether he is tapping the valuable or the valueless *Funtumia*, will shortly be illustrated in my book on Liberia. The range of the *Funtumia elastica* appears to extend from the middle of Liberia eastward as far as western Uganda. It is found in a portion of the Bahr-al-Ghazal region and in the northern

[a] There are two species of ebony-producing *Dalbergia* in Liberia, one of which has just been discovered by an agent of the Monrovian Rubber Company—*Dalbergia liberica*.

VAI WOMEN.

A "DEVIL DANCE" IN A VAI TOWN.

A MANDIGO FAMILY ON THE ST. PAULS RIVER.

SURF ON THE LIBERIAN BEACH.

part of the Kongo Free State. The *Funtumia africana* is more strictly West African in its range, from Portuguese Guinea to the Kongo basin. In the western regions of the Kongo Free State and in Angola a third *Funtumia* is found, which, like *Funtumia africana*, is of not much value to the rubber trade. Mr. Alexander Whyte, in his systematic examination of the Liberian flora, which he undertook at my request during 1904, has discovered two new species of wild coffee—*Coffea nudiflora* and *Coffea ligustrifolia.* The well-known Liberian coffee with a big berry is, of course, indigenous to the country, and is now being exclusively cultivated by the Americo-Liberians on the coast.

In Liberia, of course, as in most densely forested countries, the displays in color masses of large aggregations of flowers are not so often observed as in the park lands and more open country. Still, there are many objects of beauty in the forest which should be enumerated as prominent features in Liberian scenery. Every pool and creek of still water is covered with water lilies, chiefly the common *Nymphæa lotus*, a small variety of which is also present, and is peculiar to Liberia. In the damp glades there are abundance of *Crinum* and *Hæmanthus* lilies. A small and very beautiful terrestrial orchis grows on the surface of the water in shallow pools. In the dense forests there are numerous epiphytic orchids, chiefly *Angræcums*, with enormously long nectaries. A species of vanilla grows wild in the bush. There are many zingiberaceous plants in the undergrowth of the forest, sometimes with large and delicately colored flowers, at others remarkable for the size and rich coloring of their leaves. Among these may be noted *Costus*, *Amomum*, *Thalia*, and *Renealmia.* Another family of plants well represented in the undergrowth, and remarkable for the variety and beauty of their foliage, are the arums. Prominent among these are *Anchomanes*, *Culcasia*, *Nephthytis*, *Aglaonema*, and *Cytosperma.* The *Lonchocarpus* tree has at times magnificent displays of lilac blossom, not unlike wistaria in shape and color. The waxy-white camelia-like flowers of the *Anona* are objects of great beauty, especially where they are thickly clustered along the horizontal branches. The *Mussændas* also light up the forest with their red or white bracts. One *Mussænda*, or a closely allied plant, has gorgeous scarlet-crimson bracts like a *Poinsettia;* another, which is very common, not only in Liberia, but throughout the whole forest region of West Africa from Portuguese Guinea to Uganda, has a cluster of large white bracts below the yellow flowers. These bracts, which are leaflike in shape (though not like the leaves of the plant itself), look at a distance like foliage cut out of white velvet. The *Ochna multiflora* is a beautiful flowering tree.

Beyond the forest region a parklike country is entered, inhabited for the most part nowadays by a more or less Mohammedanized people, belonging chiefly to the Mandingo stock. These Mandingos keep large herds of cattle, examples of which find their way down to the coast through the forest roads. They are similar to the breed which is on sale at the market of Sierra Leone—smallish, straight-backed cattle (without a hump), one-colored as a rule (fawn or gray or reddish-yellow), with rather long horns. This breed resembles in miniature the long-horned Gala ox which is found in southern Abyssinia, and thence, with several breaks in its distribution, to Uganda and the west side of Tanganyika, and across the Nile to the shores of Lake Chad. The Mandingo ox is, to my thinking, simply a dwarfed variety of this Gala breed, which seems to have been the oldest form of domestic ox known in Africa. In origin it is thought to be more connected with the Indian cattle than with the descendants of *Bos taurus;* but when it is found in its purest form, it has not got the hump that is associated with the zebu species, though it freely mixes with that type, and sometimes thus acquires the zebu hump in addition to the characteristics of the extremely long, spreading horns (longest in the cow) and the tendency to be one-colored. I am not so sure myself that this type of ox is necessarily descended from *Bos indicus.* It is represented in the paintings of the Egyptian monuments together with the zebu type. It may have been descended from an intermediate type of wild ox native to north-east Africa—intermediate between *Bos taurus* and *Bos indicus.*

In this open Mandingo country of hills, mountains, and grass lands there is said to be a great deal of big game. The lion exists there, hartebeests of the West African type, water buck, giraffe, roan antelope, reed buck, possibly zebra, rhinoceros, and giraffe. Elephants are abundant all over Liberia down to within about 30 miles of the coast region. In fact, many of the paths through the forest are little else than elephant tracks. Elephants are a good deal dreaded by the natives of the forest region, as they are alleged to attack man quite unprovoked. They do a great deal of damage to plantations. The Mandingos, by-the-bye, have horses similar in appearance to the native breeds of Nigeria. Occasionally one of these horses finds its way down to the coast in Liberia, but, as a rule, the few horses one meets with at Liberian coast towns have been brought by sea from French Guinea (Konakri). It is an important fact, however, of great negative value, that apparently there is no Nagana or tsetse fly disease in Liberia. No doubt there are one or more species of *Glossina* related to the tsetse fly, but they do not carry the celebrated tsetse disease to horses and cattle.

The principal and remarkable animals of the Liberian forest region are, among antelopes, the handsomest of the Tragelaphs, the bongo.

This splendid animal, good specimens of which are to be seen in the Natural History Museum, at South Kensington, is almost the largest in size of the Tragelaphs, being exceeded only by the eland. It is magnificently colored bright chestnut red, with a few points of black, and bold white stripes and bars. It seems to be fairly common in the Liberian forests, which also conceal in their recesses curious developments of the cephalophine antelopes, or duykers. These duykers in other parts of Africa are usually associated with the idea of a very small antelope; but in Liberia there is the widespread *Cephalophus sylvicultrix*, which is nearly the size of a small cow, and *Cephalophus jentincki*, which is about the size of a fallow deer, with short stout horns. Besides several small types of duyker there is the tiniest of all the antelopes—the royal antelope—not so large as a hare; and there is the beautiful zebra antelope, which is bright yellow bay boldly marked with bold black stripes, a most unusual coloration in this group. The buffalo of the forest region is the red-haired, dwarf, short-horned buffalo. The ordinary big hippopotamus is said to be present in the lower Kavalli River, but Liberian streams and forests are for the most part frequented by the pigmy hippopotamus, an animal which probably extends its range from the interior of Sierra Leone to the French Ivory Coast. Before I leave the question of the fauna I should like to mention that, in addition to there being apparently no Glossina fly to spread the tsetse disease, there is a great relief in other directions from the ordinary insect pests of Africa. Mosquitoes are very seldom met with. In fact, they seem to be entirely absent from much of the forest region. Nor are white ants very common or destructive in the centers of population.

The human population of Liberia consists of the following elements, which may be divided first of all into indigenes and Americo-Liberians. The former number something like 2,000,000 and the latter between 12,000 and 15,000. So far as the outside world is concerned, the world of treaties and congresses, the country which we know as Liberia is considered to belong to and be governed by this small caste of English-speaking negroes and half-breeds of American origin. These English-speaking negroes certainly govern and administer the coast line and a belt of more or less settled country which extends from 20 to 40 miles inland. Of late years they have been on generally friendly terms with the 2,000,000 indigenous negroes, some of whom have come very much under their influence.

The Americo-Liberians are the survivors or the descendants of freed slaves or persons dissatisfied with their social condition in the United States of America during the early part of the nineteenth century. A considerable number of them also came from the British West Indies; but the movement which founded Liberia—the black Republic on the west coast of Africa—originated with certain philan-

thropic societies in the United States about 1821. The idea, however, in its genesis was the outcome of that still earlier movement in Great Britain which led to the formation of Sierra Leone. When British philanthropy in the eighteenth century was awakened to the injustice of the slave trade and the unhappy condition of many of the runaway slaves or freed negroes in the West Indies or in British America, it was decided to repatriate a number of these people, and for that purpose (possibly also with an eye to the main chance in securing for Great Britain one of the few good natural harbors on the west coast of Africa—Seirra Leone) a settlement was formed on the site of the modern Free Town, without overmuch regard to the feelings or rights of the local inhabitants. In the same way, when it was decided in the United States to found a home for the repatriated African, the prior experiment of Sierra Leone turned attention toward the same coast, and in 1821 and at subsequent dates settlements were effected, firstly at Monrovia, and later on at Roberts Port, Grand Basa, Sino, and Harper (Cape Palmas). Usually those who conducted the enterprise went through the form of buying small plats of land from local headmen or chiefs; but, as a rule, the promoters of this movement did not trouble overmuch about the rights of the "bush niggers," as the indigenous natives were termed. Consequently the first fifty years of the history of Liberia were marked by constant struggles between the Americo-Liberian invaders and the native blacks. During the last ten years, however, there has been a marked advance in good relations between the American settlers and their native subjects, as many of them may fairly be called. The wise policy of President Barclay has greatly promoted this good feeling since 1904. He has been able to assemble at different times at the capital chiefs or their representatives from almost all parts of Liberia, even from the Mandingo districts just beyond the limits of the coast belt. Therefore they have no subject of disagreement. Curiously enough one example of this mild rule of black by black is that the white man in Liberia is everywhere received with great friendliness, because he is not associated in the minds of the natives with anything like conquest or oppression.

How far the original experiment will succeed the next twenty years will, perhaps, indicate. The negroes of American origin who have settled in Liberia have not, as a general rule, been able to stand the climate very much better than Europeans, and, as a rule, they have not been able to rear large families of children. Yet it seems to me as though Liberians of the new generation born in the country are beginning to take hold, but this is partly due to the increasing and I think very sensible practice of intermarriage with women of the fine, vigorous, indigenous races. Probably the future of Liberia will be a negro state very like Sierra Leone in its development, with English as its government language, and such English or American institutions

as may prove to be suited to an African country, a coast belt inhabited by negroes professing Christianity and wearing clothes of European cut, and a hinterland of Mohammedans dressed in the picturesque and wholly suitable costume worn at the present day by the Mandingos and by most Mohammedan negroes between Senegal and the White Nile.

The native races of Liberia, the languages they speak, and the religions they profess may, to a certain extent, be grouped under two classes—the Mandingo on the one hand and the Kru negro on the other. I am aware, of course, that the Mandingo type is a very variable one physically, according to the less or greater degree of Caucasian blood which permeates its negro stock, and also that the Kru man proper is confined in his distribution to a small portion of the southern coast of Liberia. But each of these types is sufficiently representative to serve as a general illustration of the two classes of Liberian peoples. Associated with the Mandingos, to a great extent in language, in Mohammedan religion, and in the adoption of the Arab dress, are the Vai and the Gora of western Liberia, and to some extent the Buzi or Kimbuza. All the remaining tribes are more or less related to the Kru stock in language, appearance, physique, customs, and the profession of a pagan and fetishistic religion, similar in general features to the fetish religions of all western and west central Africa, with some points of resemblance to the Bantu beliefs in the southern half of Africa. The Gora language of western Liberia is rather a puzzle in classification, and it must be admitted that it only offers the slightest affinity to the Mandingo group and an equally slender connection with the Kru family. In a still more generalized way it may be said that there are distant resemblances between the languages of the Kru and Mandingo stocks; nor can these slight resemblances be altogether explained by the mere imposition of linguistic influences. The Mandingos, who are destined to play a most important part in the development of Liberia and of much of West Africa, are nothing but a varying degree of cross between the Fula race of the West African park lands and the ordinary West African negro. This crossing and the founding of this group of people—the correct pronunciation of whose name seems to be Mading'a, or Manding'a—may have been a relatively ancient one. The Mandingos, in fact, are the Swahilis of West Africa and offer a striking resemblance in face to the average type of Swahili porter that one meets with on the Zanzibar coast. They also often resemble natives of Uganda, and for the same reason—that a good deal of the population of Uganda is infused with a slight Hamitic element derived from the Hima aristocracy. Several Mandingos whom I met at Monrovia were able to speak Arabic in a halting fashion. The Arab words they understood best were those pronounced in the

North African dialect. It seems to me that in some cases the Caucasian element in the Mandingos was derived from direct intermixture of Berbers and Arabs from North Africa with the negroes of the Upper Niger. I doubt if any pure-blooded Fula people extend their range into the northern limits of Liberia; but they have had an undoubted influence in times past over the development of the park land which lies beyond the forest. By their minglings with the indigenous negroes of the Sudanese and West African type they have created the Mandingo peoples and have also carried Mohammedan civilization and tenets into that part of Africa, as well as, no doubt, the Sudanese breeds of cattle and sheep. The domestic sheep of all the *forest* region of Liberia is that common to the other forested parts of West Africa—the sheep with erect ears, fairly well-developed horns, small size, black and white coloring, a tail without any fatty development, and a long throat mane in the male. Far back in the interior of Liberia I am informed that the Mandingo sheep are similar to those of the Sudan, with fat tails and without the throat mane.

It should hardly come within the limits of the present paper to discuss one of the most interesting problems in Africa—the origin of the Fula race. Personally I am still disposed toward the old theory that the Fulas were an early cross between the Libyans of North Africa and the negroes of Senegal, a cross in which the Caucasian element predominated considerably. They certainly offer marked resemblances, however, to the Hamitic aristocracy of the Upper Nile and the lake regions. Their language is a complete puzzle. At present it can not be said to offer affinities of a marked kind to any group of negro speech, but it is emphatically a negro tongue (with a faint suggestion here and there of the Bantu family), and not in any way influenced by Hamitic, Libyan, or Semitic characteristics. As to the Libyan affinities of Hausa there can be no doubt, but nothing of the kind has as yet been discerned in the structure or vocabulary of the Fulfulde. It even seems to offer less resemblances in structure to the Hamitic language family, for example, than can be discerned in the Bantu.

Of all the peoples in Liberia affiliated with the Kru stock perhaps the most numerous group is that of the Kru, which occupies the coast of Liberia between the French frontier at the Kavalli River and the river Sestos. With the Kru I associate the Grebo, as the two peoples differ but little in language and scarcely at all in physical type. The Grebos are inclining strongly toward Christianity, but very few, if any, converts to that religion have been made among the Kru people proper who inhabit the coast between Greenville and Garraway. Krus and Grebos together number something like 375,000. The next most important group of people, as regards numbers, are the Mandingos, of whom there are perhaps 300,000 within the limits of Libe-

ria. After them may be ranked the Kpwesi people, a general term for a congeries of tribes speaking dialects of a common language. These Kpwesi (familiarly known by the Americo-Liberians as Pessi, or Pessa) may be as many as 250,000. In an appendix to this paper the rest of the tribes and their approximate numbers are enumerated.

In the central parts of Liberia, within the limits of the forest, there is no doubt that cannibalism prevails. This is a very marked feature in the life of the Beila, or Bele. These people are said to relish most keenly the hands and feet, and this very dainty dish is usually set before a king or chief alone. Nowhere in Liberia have I noticed—nor has any explorer encountered or reported—any race of negroes wholly naked, either among men or women, such as are so commonly met with in eastern Equatorial Africa, or until a few years ago in parts of South Central Africa. A certain degree of complete nudity in unmarried women was at one time quite a common feature of the natives of the Niger delta, the Cross River, and the Kamerun, while on the upper Cross River complete nudity among the men was just beginning to disappear twenty years ago. Throughout Liberia no one has ever observed complete nudity among either men or women. Though there are a few rare exceptions to this rule, it may generally be observed that the marked feature of male nudity so characteristic of the Upper Nile, the eastern equatorial regions, and originally of the north end of Lake Nyassa and central Zambezia, is never met with in the forested regions of Africa, except possibly here and there among the Pigmies. Throughout the Kongo basin and countries as completely savage as the innermost parts of Liberia, the men wear a minimum of clothing, which is a concession to ideas of decency, and which, when the race is quite out of touch with the trade of the outer world, is generally a strip of bast (bark cloth) from a fig tree. I have not observed any of the savages from the interior of Liberia wearing dressed skins. I am told that so greedy are they after food that when any beast is killed the hide is roasted and eaten. On the other hand, the civilized Mandingos of the north have learned from the Fulas or from the Moors, or possibly from both, the most beautiful work in leather.

Nowhere along the coast of Liberia is there a harbor in the sense of the bay at Sierra Leone. All the anchorages, in fact, are open roadsteads. But on the other hand, this is not a particularly dangerous condition for ships, as the south wind never blows strongly enough to raise a big sea, while the north wind, coming from off the land, can only affect the Atlantic at some distance from the shore. But of course this portless condition adds very much to the discomfort of dealings with Liberia. Although the swell from the choppy surface raised by the wind may not be sufficiently serious to affect big vessels lying at anchor, it is not at all nice for small boats or steam launches, and generally during the rainy season of the year transfer-

ence from the big steamer to the shore-going boat has to be effected by means of a crane and a cradle. Still more to be dreaded on some points on the coast is the landing or the going off on account of the surf. Perhaps the best approach to a sheltered harbor which exists is at the capital, Monrovia. Here there is a bar to a small river or creek which communicates with the St. Pauls River. The bar is very seldom rough, being to a certain extent sheltered by a promontory, and once across the bar you can land quite comfortably on the beach in perfectly smooth water. But at places like Grand Basá, Sinó, and Cape Palmas, the landing can be extremely dangerous and disagreeable. One seldom arrives at or departs from these places without, at any rate, a wetting from the rollers that break over the stern or bow of the boat. However, real accidents to persons or property are, it must be confessed, of rare occurrence, and the whole question depends very much on the good or ill will of the Kru boys who direct the steering.

The Kavalli River, though probably less in volume than the St. Pauls, is the most navigable as a means of access to the interior. Unfortunately there is a very bad bar at the mouth of the Kavalli or it would have played a very different part in the history of West Africa. Once across the bar, a steam launch or a rowing boat can ascend the river for about 80 miles, when the first rapids are reached. The upper Kavalli is imperfectly known, and, indeed, its extreme upper course is still a matter of conjecture. On the definition of its course depends to a great extent the laying down of the northeastern frontier of Liberia according to the French treaty of 1892.

The St. Pauls River is only navigable as far as a place called White Plains, about 20 miles from the mouth. There is no difficulty about the bar at the mouth of the St. Pauls, for this reason, that one can land with little or no risk at Monrovia; and once inside the Mesurado River (which is merely a creek), one can embark on a small river steamer, of which there are two or three in existence, enter the St. Pauls River by the Stockton Creek, and thence ascend the St. Pauls to the first rapids near the settlement known as White Plains. All the lower part of the St. Pauls River is pretty thick with Americo-Liberian settlements, some of them of a distinctly prosperous and prepossessing appearance. Several of the officials at Monrovia have country houses on the banks of the St. Pauls amid charming surroundings. This great virtue may be attributed to the Americo-Liberians, that they certainly know how to build houses, comely in appearance, sanitary, and lasting, or as reasonably durable as one can expect in a land of heat and moisture. In fact, the leading characteristics of the Americo-Liberians are their love of building and their remarkable politeness.

For some distance above its first rapids the St. Pauls River is scarcely navigable for canoes; but in the little-known region north of Dobli Zulu Island, it is said to be navigable for canoes up to its junction with the Tuma, which is also stated to be an important stream.

Eastward of Monrovia, the Mesurado River or Creek reaches, as a navigable piece of water, to within a very short distance of the Junk Creek, which is a branch of the Dukwia River; so that, except for a little isthmus of sandy soil, Monrovia might be situated at the western extremity of a long island. With developments that might come later on, it would be very easy to cut a canal to join the Mesurado and the Junk rivers. This would then give access for vessels of light draft to the Dukwia and Farmington rivers. These streams debouch at a settlement of some importance named Marshall; but the bar at Marshall (mouth of the river Junk) is extremely bad and dangerous. As a matter of fact, with a very little expenditure of money Monrovia might be made a good port.

The population of Monrovia, so far as Americo-Liberians and foreigners are concerned, is about 2,500. It has a system of telephones which connects it with the settlements on the St. Pauls River. This has been set up and is well worked by a native Liberian. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to remind you that Monrovia was named after the celebrated President of the United States, Monroe, who is responsible for that doctrine which inhibits any European nation from further conquests in the New World. The capital of Liberia is divided into two parts, the low and shoreward section being given over to large settlements of Kru boys and indigenous negroes, while the upper part of the town is inhabited by Americo-Liberians and European consuls, traders, etc. This civilized part of the town is composed of broad, grass-grown streets, and substantial, well-built, comely looking houses, churches, offices, and public buildings. The smart appearance of the houses, in fact, is in somewhat striking contrast to the neglected condition of the roads. These have never been made, and are simply the unleveled rock of more or less flat surface. Consequently at the present time they are absolutely unsuited to any vehicle, though I have seen an enterprising Liberian negotiate them with a bicycle. They are generally covered with a very short, close turf of thickly growing plants, which is kept in the condition of turf by the constant nibbling of the pretty little cattle that frequent the streets of Monrovia. A less agreeable feature are the pigs, which exist in great numbers and perform the office of scavengers. The appearance of most of the houses is, as I have said, either very striking or comely both in form and color, and this appearance is enhanced by the beautiful clumps of trees and the gardens which surround most of the houses. The Americo-Liberians seem to be

very fond of flowers, and have gardens full of roses, oleanders, allemandas, bougainvillia, and frangipani in constant bloom. There are numerous churches and a masonic hall.

There is a good deal of civilization and comfort and signs of proggress at the settlements, which are grouped together under the general name of Grand Basa, and also at the Sino towns, the principal of which is named Greenville. But perhaps, on the whole, the most go-ahead and energetic assemblage of Americo-Liberians is to be found at Harper (Cape Palmas). Here there is a philosophical society, which is doing a good work in collecting and printing statistics about Liberia. But Harper, unfortunately for Europeans, is a good deal more unhealthy than Monrovia.

Compared with other parts of West Africa, I should say that Liberia is less unhealthy for the European than Sierra Leone, the Ivory coast, the Gold coast, or Lagos. But it is, perhaps, too soon to judge. It is noteworthy, however, that the remarkable absence of mosquitoes should to a great extent coincide with a less marked prevalence of malarial fevers.

From the European point of view, perhaps the most healthy part of Liberia is the northern half, and from all accounts it would be the Mandingo plateau that Europeans would prefer for their trading or mining settlements.

The great undoubted wealth of Liberia lies, as I have already pointed out, in its rubber, but the trade in this product is as yet only in its infancy. Another important article of export in the future will be timber. Piasava, which is a fiber derived from the rind of the fronds of a Raphia palm, figures to some extent in the exports, which also include coffee, a little cacao, ivory, copal, palm oil, palm kernels, ginger, camwood, and annatto.

APPENDIX I.

PEOPLES AND TRIBES OF LIBERIA.

The following is a summary of the principal Americo-Liberian towns and settlements with their approximate populations. The enumeration commences with Roberts Port, not far from the western (Sierra Leone) frontier of Liberia, and proceeds northward, southward, and eastward to the French frontier along the Kavalli River:

A LIBERIAN COLONEL OF MILITIA.

THE OLD AND THE NEW—AMERICO-LIBERIAN LADIES AMONG THE DUG-OUT CANOES ON A KRU BEACH.

A LIBERIAN COFFEE PLANTATION.

STUDY OF THE FOREST ON A LIBERIAN RIVER.

		Americo-Liberian population.
County of Montserrado:		
Roberts Port		400
Royesville		50
St. Pauls River settlements—		
New Georgia	200	
Virginia	100	
Caldwell	200	
Brewerville	300	
Clay Ashland	400	
Louisiana	100	
New York	50	
White Plains	300	
Millsburg	250	
Arthington	300	
Careysburg	400	
Crozierville	100	
Bensonville	150	
Robertsville	150	
Harrisburg	250	
		3,250
Settlements on the Mesurado River—		
Barnersville, Gardenersville, Johnsonville, Paynesville		200
Monrovia		2,500
Junk River settlements—		
Schiefflin and Powellsville	225	
Mount Olive	150	
Marshall	125	
Farmington River and Owens Grove	300	
		800
County of Grand Basa:		
Basa settlements—		
Little Basa	50	
Edina	250	
Hartford	50	
St. Johns River	350	
Upper Buchanan	400	
Lower Buchanan (Basa)	600	
Tobakoni	50	
		1,750
Coast between Grand Basa and River Cestos		150
On the River Cestos		50
County of Sino:		
Sino settlements—		
Sino River	50	
Lexington	100	
Greenville	350	
Philadelphia	125	
Georgia	125	
		750
Settlements on Kru coast—		
Nana Kru, Setra Kru, Nifu, Sas Town, Garawe		150
County of Maryland:		
Settlements round Cape Palmas and on the lower Kavalli River—		
Rock Town	100	
Harper	900	
Philadelphia	100	
Latrobe	50	
Cuttington	100	
Half Kavalli	50	
Hoffman	50	
Middlesex	50	
Jacksonville	75	
Bunker Hill	25	
Tubman Town	100	
New Georgia	25	
Hillierville	25	
		1,650
Americo-Liberians scattered about Kelipo in far interior of Maryland County; in the Boporo country, near the Sierra Leone frontier, and on the upper St. Pauls River, etc., say		150
Total Liberians of American origin		11,850

The approximate total coast population of "civilized" Liberians (mostly Christian, and of mixed American and indigenous negro races) amounts to 40,000. The "Liberian" community, therefore, at the present time amounts to a population in the coast region of about 50,000 in number.

There are a good many other native villages and small isolated settlements or farms of Americo-Liberians which it would be tedious to enumerate by name. The ones and twos in such scattered settlements as these (such as Fish Town, Puduke, Weabo, Pequenino Ses, etc.) may be taken as a set-off against any possible exaggeration of numbers in connection with the more populous places.

These Americo-Liberians at present constitute the governing caste of the country. In origin about two-thirds are from the United States of America and one-third from the British West Indies. It is curious that in a general way the men who have come most to the front in the history of Liberia have been of British West Indian descent rather than emigrants or descendants of emigrants from the United States. They came, or their ancestors came, to Liberia rather to seek a profitable field for their enterprise than in any attempt to flee from conditions of slavery or other kinds of unsatisfactory social environment. The Liberians of British West Indian origin have generally been removed one or even two generations from a condition of slavery. They are also for the most part better educated and remember more as to their actual African origin than is the case with those whose immediate ancestors have come from the United States. For instance, the present President of Liberia, the Hon. Arthur Barclay, knows that the negro stock from which he sprang came from the district of Popo, now on the borderland of French and German territory, in the western part of the Dahome coast. English is naturally the universal language used by the Americo-Liberians. It is variously spoken by them, those originally of United States origin speaking it with a very strong "American" accent, while the Liberians who have sprung from the British West Indies talk English—that is to say, educated persons do—with but slight accent, and in the case of those who have received additional education in England, with no very obvious accent at all. A good deal of connection in sentiment is still kept up with the United States, though perhaps there is an increasing tendency, so far as higher education is concerned, for the dispatch of young Liberians to study in England at such places as the Liverpool schools and the African Training Institute of Colwyn Bay. But several local educational institutes are generously maintained by American philanthropists. The station of Arthington, on the St. Pauls River, is named after the celebrated philanthropist of that name connected with Leeds (Yorkshire), who did so much to establish the first missionary steamers on the Kongo, and whose name is very gratefully remembered in Liberia for the assistance that he has given in educational work.

The indigenous population of Liberia, not of extraneous origin, may be estimated with some correctness at a total of about 2,160,000. [In Vol. II, pp. 884–901, of his book on "Liberia," New York, 1906, Sir Harry Johnston gives additional information about the native races, estimating the population at 2,000,000.] They may be enumerated as follows:

Locality.	Name of tribe.	Approximate numbers.
County of Mesurado	Vai	100,000
	De	10,000
North of the Vai	Bandi	200,000
North of the Bandi	Kisi	150,000
Beyond the Kisi people	Buzi	50,000
Beyond the Buzi, stretching over to the northwestern and northern parts of the Republic	Mandingo	[a] 300,000
Behind the De people, along the St. Pauls River at the back of Monrovia	Gora	150,000
North and east of the Gora people	Kpwesi [b]	250,000
Beyond the Kpwesi, to the west and north, are the Buzi (already mentioned) and the tribe known as	Bere, or Bele	50,000
To the north of the Bere	Gizima and Buni	30,000
On the coast, beyond the De people of Monrovia, begins the big tribe of Basa people, and farther inland the	Basa Gibi [c]	200,000
South of the Basa group, along the coast from the northern limits of Sino County to the Kavalli River, are the	Kru tribes [d]	375,000
Behind the Kru coast are the	Putu people [e]	150,000
Behind the Grebo, in the Kavalli region (Maryland County)	Kelipo	150,000
Approximate total of indigenous negro population of Liberia.		2,165,000

[a] It is probable that the total population of the various Mandingo tribes considerably exceeds this estimate, which is arrived at by putting together the computations of each separate branch as given to me by its representatives at Monrovia. The proper pronunciation of the well-known tribal name Mandingo appears to be "Manding'a," or "Mading'a." They are a race that will play a very notable part in the development of West Africa. The whole of this tribe, which populates the hinterland of Liberia, parts of Sierra Leone, and the southern part of the French "Sudan," must number one or two millions. Their language is harmonious in sound and simple and logical in construction, therefore easily acquired. They are Mohammedans to a very great extent, only a few branches in the Liberian hinterland remaining pagan. In consequence they dress picturesquely and suitably, like the majority of Mohammedanized Africans in the Niger Basin and the northern Sudan, with wide breeches, voluminous tobes, and fezes, or round skullcaps. They are a fine-looking race as regards physical development, and their physiognomy reveals the secret of their power, namely, the slight infusion of Caucasian blood. They are, in fact, the result of an early intermingling of the Berber from the Sahara Desert with the negroes of the Niger Basin. They are a very industrious people, with a remarkable feeling for art, which is at present confined to elaborate leatherwork and the shaping of picturesque garments. The principal divisions of the Mandingo race in the hinterland of Liberia—proceeding from west to east—are the following: Boporo, Kwang'a, Mwela, and Dukwira. Their towns are nearly always surrounded by clay walls, the architecture of which, judging from such photographs as I have seen, is strongly reminiscent of the towns of Nigeria.

[b] This is the race named on most maps in the incorrect orthography "Pessy." It knows itself as Gbele, but for some reason is called by most of the surrounding tribes Kpwesi, which, on various grounds, is the most convenient name. A portion of the Kpwesi race is known as the Gbwalin, a name that appears incorrectly on our maps as "Barline."

[c] Behind the Basa and Gibi peoples one comes again to the great Kpwesi tribe.

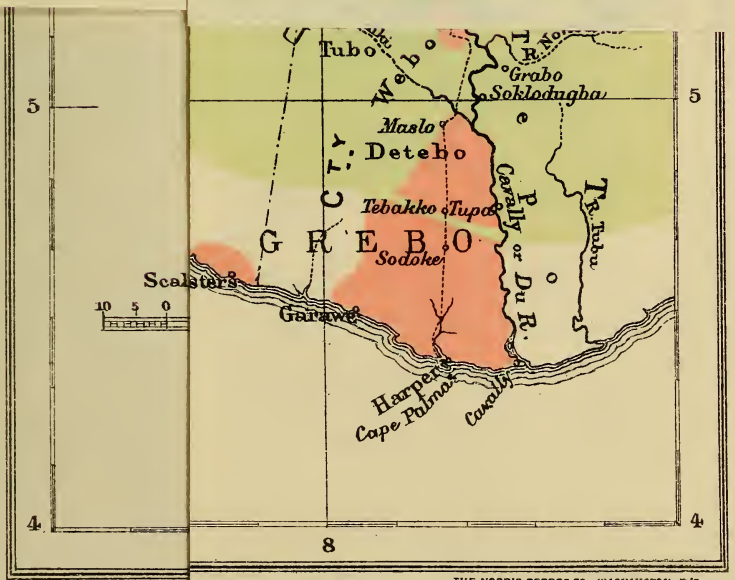
[d] The Kru tribes may be divided up under the following designations, but all the people included under these names do not extend farther into the interior than about 60 miles from the coast:

Sino people	75,000
Sikong (beyond the Sino)	100,000
Kru people proper (including all isolated colonies of Krumen elsewhere in Liberia)	140,000
Grebo people	60,000

[e] The Putu people seem to include the following subdivisions or separate tribes: Tatue, Nyapo, Pete, Tuo, and Gireo.

The Americo-Liberians of course are Christians, belonging entirely to various sections of the Protestant churches—Anglican, Methodist Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, etc. There is one establishment at Monrovia of the White Fathers, a Roman Catholic mission, mainly French and Dutch in the nationality of its missionaries. So far the fathers have made no converts, but the mission has only just been established. There is a good deal of activity amongst the various missionary societies dependent on the Protestant churches represented in Liberia, and this is largely financed from the United States of America. The work is carried on almost invariably by missionaries having some proportion, large or small, of African blood in their veins. A good deal of their work is educational, and has certainly brought solid advantages to the coast negroes of Liberia. Outside the negroes of American origin there are not many converts to Christianity. Such as there are come from the Kru peoples and the Grebo principality. Perhaps of all the native races the Grebo is the most Christianized and civilized. The Vai, some of the Gora, and nearly all the Mandingo peoples are Mohammedan—not fanatically, but very genuinely as regards adherence to Mohammedan precepts. The spread of Mohammedanism in the western and northern districts of Liberia has been of immense benefit to the country, diminishing the traffic in alcohol and checking drunkenness, which elsewhere in Liberia is so common among the negroes—a drunkenness induced just as often by the native forms of alcohol (palm wine, etc.) as by the consumption of European spirits.

At the present time the ports of entry into the Liberian Republic at which foreigners may settle and trade are the following (running from west to east): Roberts Port, Monrovia, Marshall, Grand Basa, Grand Ses (Cess), Greenville, Nana Kru, Cape Palmas, and Kavalli. Foreigners also are allowed to trade within a zone of 3 miles along all the inland frontiers of Liberia. It is, I believe, the intention of the Liberian executive to add to these recognized ports of entry places in the interior and on the coast as soon as communication has been opened up and the Liberian Government is in a position to maintain law and order at these places.



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